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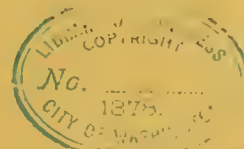
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GERMANY.

"POPE GREGORY VII. IN CONFLICT WITH EMPEROR HENRY IV."

Emperor Henry IV. in penitentials is standing in Canossa, imploring Pope Gregory VII. to withdraw the anathema pronounced against him.

1077

The reign of the German emperor Henry IV., of the house of the Salian Franks (1066 to 1160), was nothing but a chain of troubles, misfortunes, degradation and treason.

When his father, Emperor Henry III., died, in the year 1056, Henry IV. was but six years old. His mother, Empress Agnes, a very intelligent and noble-hearted woman, first undertook the education of her son and the government of the empire. Soon, however, she found herself in a difficult position, having to contend with many refractory seigniors of the realm, whom even the energetic Henry III. had been unable to entirely subdue, who had deposed three popes one after the other, and tried to render the power of the dukes wholly dependent on the crown. It was, therefore, an unlucky circumstance for Henry IV. to be so very young at his father's death, when ecclesiastical and secular princes, beginning to feel tired of his father's strict rule, saw a fit occasion, during his minority, for throwing off their chains and again making themselves independent. It was a still greater misfortune for young Henry that his education soon fell into the hands of two men, who, in principles and passions, formed a powerful contrast to each other, and alienated the young monarch's heart from his subjects. One of them was Archbishop Hanno of Cologne, a pious, serious and scientific man, but governed by an insatiable ambition, which induced him to place himself at the head of a faction dissatisfied with the empress, and to kidnap the young prince. Hanno now put himself up as Lord Lieutenant of the empire, enriched his followers with the estates of the emperor, and at length, even forced the empress to leave the country.

At that time there was a bishop in Bremen of the name of Adalbert, who enjoyed a far spread reputation, and whom Hanno tried to gain over to his cause. Adalbert was a man of extraordinary talents, great activity, and irreproachable conduct, but too much addicted to pomp and prodigality, and therefore in constant need of money.

Adalbert, by his insinuating manner, soon

gained the heart of young Henry, who was watched by Hanno with the greatest strictness. But this circumstance would not have been of any serious consequence, if the principles of these two ecclesiastics had not been in diametrical contradiction.

Hanno aimed at extending as far as possible the power and independence of the barons of the empire, whilst Adalbert wished for a restriction in this respect, and hoped, in young Henry, to raise up a scourge to them. All the whims and freaks of the future sovereign, finding indulgence and favor with Adalbert, it is not at all surprising that he took a dislike for the monkish Hanno, and became frivolous and haughty.

Above all the rest, the archbishop especially hated the Saxons, because they had often crossed his intentions; now he instilled this hatred into his pupil's heart, and thus laid the foundation for that series of misfortunes which marked the long reign of Henry.

When Henry had reached his sixteenth year, most of the princes of the empire, who were jealous of Adalbert's omnipotence, in a diet at Tribur, declared him to be of age, to take the reins of government into his own hands, and obliged Adalbert to leave the emperor's court, whereupon Hanno again took possession of his former privileges. But Adalbert's principles had already too firmly rooted in the young king's heart to be extirpated by the grave Hanno, and Henry began to let the Saxons feel his power. He built castles throughout their country and garrisoned them with his own people, who, instigated by the example of their master, allowed themselves to be freely ruled by all sorts of passions.

Hanno's influence over Henry, although in a very limited degree, continued until the year 1072, when he was discharged, and Adalbert, who had already returned to the court again, assumed a far greater influence than ever. Henry continually treated the Saxons with a frivolity and severity beyond measure. His armed men, from his strong castles, made inroads into the land, drove away the cattle of the peasants,

extorted oppressive taxes, violated the females, and forced the men to do socage in the construction of castles. Consequently, when Henry summoned them to an expedition to Poland, they refused to obey, renounced allegiance, and even entered into a formal coalition against him.

An army of 60,000 Saxons gathered and made its appearance before Goslar, where Henry usually resided, and it was only with great difficulty that he could escape and seek refuge in the castle of Hartzburg, one of his most powerful strongholds. The Saxons, however, followed him thither, and being unable successfully to defend the castle against their superior numbers, he again escaped during the night, by some hidden bye-paths, and at length arrived safely at Eschwege in Hessa. The Saxons, having another intention, did not follow him thus far, but destroyed nearly all the strongholds built in their country by Henry, Hartzburg not excepted, on which occasion its really fine church was also reduced to a heap of ruins. This circumstance was fatal to the Saxons, for Henry made complaints, on account of this deed, to Pope Gregory VII., (whose name, before his accession to the Holy See, was Hildebrand), who eagerly seized this opportunity to mix himself in the German affairs.

In the meanwhile Henry had gained many adherents in Germany, although the princes of the empire entertained a secret purpose of electing Duke Rodolphus of Suabia, emperor of Germany in his stead. At the head of an army, Henry marched against his inveterate enemies, in the year 1075, and met them at Hohenberg, on the river Unstrut, where he gained a complete victory over them, June 8th. But his victory was obtained at a severe cost, for the Saxons had fought with desperation, and many of his noble warriors, among whom was Margrave Ernest the Brave of Austria, lost their lives in the battle. Henry, however, made no wise use of his victory; the Saxon princes who had fallen into captivity, were treated with the greatest severity, and the people were again obliged to suffer the hardest oppression.

The Saxons in their misery, now, in their turn, addressed themselves to Pope Gregory, who eagerly seized their complaints, as a means of humbling the haughty German emperor, and thus to lessen the influence which Henry III. had exercised in Rome with unflinching authority. Gregory, upon the affidavit of the Saxons, that Henry ruled in their country, in an unwarrantable manner, summoned him before his tribunal in Rome, to answer this charge, and threatened him with excommunication, if he should not comply.

Henry, irritated by this arrogance of the Pope, assembled the German bishops at Worms, and caused them to renounce their allegiance to Rome. But Gregory, well acquainted with Henry's precarious situation in Germany, was not in the least troubled by this declaration of the German bishops, and in the very same year pronounced the excommunication of the emperor, who, to his great disappointment, found himself

deserted by most of his former friends, as soon as the fact of the excommunication became known in Germany. The Saxons immediately rose against him, and even most of the princes of the realm, at a meeting at Tribur, acknowledged the Pope's ban as legal.

Henry now became well aware of his dangerous situation, and made all sorts of promises to the princes, but dissatisfied with the fickleness of his former conduct, they would not recognise him as their lawful monarch, unless the papal anathema be withdrawn from him. Thus Henry saw no other means of getting out of his dilemma, except by going himself to Rome, and asking the Pope to dissolve the ban.

In the midst of the hard winter of the year 1077, the unfortunate Henry, therefore, accompanied by his family, commenced his toilsome journey across the ice-fields of the Alps, to Italy. Gregory was already on his way to Germany, when, not a little astonished, he heard of the arrival of Henry at Lombardy, turned from his route and went to Cannossa. Here lived Matilda, Margravine of Tuscany, a handsome and noble lady, who entertained a magnificent court, and had long been in correspondence with Gregory. Henry went to her, and begged her to intercede for him with the Pope. But Gregory was neither moved, in his resolution, by the intercession of several great princes, nor by the prayers of his relative, Margravine Matilda, and would not consent to a reconciliation, unless the emperor had previously done penance. Henry found himself obliged to comply with this demand, and stand from morning until evening, during three days (January 28th-30th), in a severe cold, in the court-yard of the castle, divested of all his imperial insignia, dressed in a common linen robe, bare-footed and bare-headed, and prohibited from tasting food, imploring the Pope for forgiveness and mercy, by reciting the seven penitential psalms. It was not until the fourth day that the Pope allowed the unhappy and disfigured emperor to appear before him, when, in the presence of his attendants, he absolved him from the ban with grave words and haughty mien.

This act of uncommon and unprecedented severity, as well as the condition in which Henry was obliged to appear before the next diet, at Augsburg, to there hear whether or not he should continue to be emperor, and in addition to this, the fact, that in the meanwhile he had to abstain from all acts of government, and in future was in every respect to obey the dictates of Rome, roused the indignation of the Italians, who had been long ago displeased with Gregory, and who now, by promising their material aid, instigated the emperor, who in person, and in power, had so utterly degraded himself, to obtain absolution from the ban, not to fulfil in the least what he had promised. But Gregory caused the German princes to elect one anti-emperor after the other, and to live in continual conflict with Henry, up to the time of his death.

S W E D E N .

QUEEN CHRISTINA'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

The marshal leads the young queen in the midst of the assembled diet, on which occasion one man especially, belonging to the peasantry, looks at her most attentively.

YEAR 1632

Queen Christina of Sweden, celebrated for her eccentric character, was the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, the most remarkable and greatest of all the kings of Sweden, and of Maria Eleonora of Brandeburgh, distinguished for her beauty, and love of fine arts.

Christina was born at Stockholm, December 8th, 1626, and in the spring of the following year, was declared heiress of the empire, by the States of Sweden. In her second year, Gustavus took her with him on a journey to Colmar. The Governor of this city, not daring to fire the guns without the King's permission, for fear of frightening the child, Gustavus replied: "Fire them, she is a soldier's daughter, and must get used to the roar of cannon." And, indeed, she only evinced great joy at it, which pleased her father extremely.

After that moment he took her to his military reviews, and she showed so much courage in her tender years, that the king playfully promised her, that he would once lead her to such places as would entirely satisfy her warlike spirit. At her departure from Germany, in 1630, she had been taught a little farewell speech, but the king was so much occupied that he did not hear her. The little princess observing this, pulled him towards her by the coat, and the king was so much touched by this mark of affection, that he embraced her, and could hardly help shedding tears.

The queen, intending to accompany her husband on his expedition, the education of the young princess was entrusted to the princess Catherine, the king's sister, who was married to Count Palatine, John Casimir. Gustavus Adolphus then explained, in a powerful speech, to the States of Sweden his reasons for making war, and having a presentiment that he was not to see his country again, recommended his daughter Christina as heiress to the throne, while, passing over his much loved wife, he placed the government in the hands of a committee of senators.

His landing was effected on the coast of Pomerania, at the head of thirteen thousand men, where he in the outset encountered difficulties of every description, prepared even by those princes, for whose sake he had come to fight. But his

genius, his generosity and perseverance, conquered all obstacles, which inconstancy, distrust and weakness had put in his way. Victory and glory followed him everywhere, until never conquered, he met with his death in the battle of Luetzen, Nov. 2nd, 1632, not far from a large stone, on the high road, ever since called Swedenstone.* As soon as the king's death became known in Sweden, the States of the kingdom assembled immediately to proclaim the young princess queen.

When the Marshal made the motion, one of the peasantry interrupted with the question: "Who is this daughter of Gustavus Adolphus?" We do not know her, and never saw her." At the same time there was a murmur of applause, at the question, throughout the assembly. Then the marshal rose from his seat, saying, "You shall see her immediately," and when he had brought her from her room, he placed her in the midst of the assembly, but especially in front of the peasant, who had put the question, and who now looked at her most attentively. "Yes, it is she, he at length exclaimed, these are the eyes and nose, and forehead of King Gustavus; she shall be our queen."

Christina was now proclaimed queen, and the guardianship, according to the king's especial desire, put into the hands of the five highest officers of the kingdom, among whom, Lord High Chancellor Oxenstierna was the most eminent.

The will of the king, that the young queen should be brought up in every respect like a prince, was faithfully fulfilled by her guardians, to her own great satisfaction.

Young Christina had a natural and irresistible disgust for everything commonly done by women,

* The details of his death were for a long time related in different and contradictory ways; Duke Francis Albert of Saxe-Louenburgh, especially, was long considered his murderer. However, by the publication of the letters of the page Augustus of Leubelfing, who was wounded at his side, it seems to be proved beyond a doubt that Gustavus Adolphus was killed by the balls of the cuirassiers of the Emperor. His bloody jerkin was brought to Vienna, where it is still kept; his corpse was brought to Weissenfels, by the brave Bernard of Weimar, there to be delivered into the hands of the queen; but his heart, after the dissection had been made in the school-room at Munich, was then placed in the church.

and she never could be taught any of the handicrafts of females, whilst, with the greatest facility she devoted herself to corporal exercise, and to the study of languages, and the sciences. Her manner of living was also entirely different from any of her sex and age; abstinent in eating, drinking and sleeping, she endured heat and cold without complaining, and could neither be fatigued nor frightened by anything. In her fifteenth year she had attained a rare degree of perfection in the sciences and languages; she read and perfectly understood the classical authors of the Greeks and Romans, and was well versed in the French, English, and Italian languages. With the erudition of the scholar, she combined rare wit and sagacity. She usually dressed in male attire, took pleasure in horse-back riding, and even shared the dangers of hunting. She submitted to the etiquette of the court with the greatest reluctance.

Those around her person, were treated by her, alternately with great familiarity and with an air of superiority commanding respect. The great statesman Oxenstierna, she loved as a father; he was her tutor in statesmanship, and she soon displayed such a maturity of intellect, in the council of state, as to not a little astonish her guardians. In the year 1642, the states of the kingdom entreated her to take the reins of government into her own hands, but she declined, on account of her youth, and accepted royal authority only two years later, at which period she showed a great penetration of judgment, and an admirable power of will. She finished the war begun with Denmark in 1644, and by the treaty of Broemsebro, gained several provinces, and in order, by peace, to be enabled to attend to the pursuit of the arts and sciences, she did her utmost to restore order in Germany, contrary to the opinion of Oxenstierna, who, by the continuation of the war, hoped to secure still greater advantages for his country. By her talents, as well as by the political constellation of that time, Christina was called to exercise the greatest influence in the north of Europe, and for some time she was eager to act her part with honor. On several occasions she maintained the dignity of her crown, and the honor of her country. She favored commerce by wise legislation, and improved schools, and all institutions of the arts and sciences.

The whole nation was attached to her, and rejoiced at seeing the daughter of Gustavus Adol-

phus, at the head of the government, surrounded by generals and statesmen, grown up under the eyes of this great prince. It was then generally wished that the young queen should choose a husband; but such a tie was contrary to Christina's love of independence. Among the many princes that courted her, Count Palatine of Zweibrucken, her cousin in german, was especially distinguished for his noble character, vast learning, and great wisdom. Christina declined his offer, but persuaded the states of the kingdom to appoint him her successor, after which she arranged her coronation as queen with great pomp, in the year 1650. But from that moment her whole conduct underwent a most striking change. She neglected her old ministers, and listened to the advice of ambitious favorites; the intrigues of paltry passions supplanted her former noble and useful pursuits; the treasury became exhausted by dissipation: distinctions were awarded to unworthy persons, and jealousy produced not only discontent and complaints, but even factions. In this confusion the queen declared her intention to abdicate. But the old ministers, still cherishing the memory of Gustavus Adolphus, made such urgent remonstrances, and Oxenstierna used his whole influence so untiringly, as to persuade the queen to give up her intention. Christina again seized the reins of government, and for some time dispersed the clouds darkening her horizon. She no longer neglected her scientific pursuits; she invited several distinguished scholars to her court, and held correspondence with others.

Not long after, however, public affairs again became embroiled, and the conjuration of Mesenius, not only threatened her favorites, but even her own person. Christina, who in general, loved what is extraordinary, now firmly resolved to abdicate, and in presence of the assembled states of the kingdom, divested herself of the insignia of royalty, which she put into the hands of Prince Charles Gustavus, (1654) reserving to herself a certain revenue, complete independence of her own person, and supreme jurisdiction over all her attendants. Soon after, she left Sweden, with a great suit, and went to Brussels, where she adopted the Roman catholic faith, Dec. 24th, 1654. The rest of her days were spent in Rome, in the pursuit of the arts and sciences, and there she died, on the 19th of April, 1689, after having passed through many vicissitudes and sufferings, being nearly reduced to poverty.

GERMANY.

POPE GREGORY VII. IN CONFLICT WITH EMPEROR
HENRY IV.

1077

PAPST GREGOR VII. IM KAMPF MIT KAISER
HEINRICH IV.



Emperor Henry IV. in penitentials is standing in Canossa imploring Pope Gregory VII. to withdraw the anathema pronounced against him

Kaiser Heinrich IV. steht flehend zu Canossa im Bussgewande um die Lösung des gegen ihn ausgesprochenen Bannes von dem Papste Gregor VII. zu erlangen

Nº 1

SWEDEN.

QUEEN CRISTINA'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

1692

DIE THRONBESTEIGUNG DER KÖNIGIN CHRISTINA.



The Marshal leads the young queen amidst of the assembled diet, on which occasion especially one man belonging to the peasantry looks at her most attentively

Nº 2.

Der Marschall führt die junge Königin mitten unter die Versammlung der Reichsstände bei welcher Gelegenheit sie besonders ein Mann aus dem Bauernstande recht aufmerksam betrachtet



Bonaparte, surrounded by several officers is standing upon a platform distributing the badge of the Legion of Honor to the deserving.

Bonaparte steht auf einer Tribune von mehreren Offizieren umgeben und vertheilt das Ordenszeichen der Ehrenlegion an die Verdienstvollen



An impudent Frenchman, under the pretext of searching for hidden arms, takes indecent liberties with a young and noble lady, who is on her way to church, accompanied by her parents and bridegroom

Nº 4.

Ein unverschämter Franzose erlaubt sich gegen eine junge adeliche Dame, die mit ihren Aeltern und ihrem Brautigame so eben zur Kirche ging unter dem Vorwande als wolle er untersuchen, ob sie nicht gegen das Verbot Waffen bei sich führe, grobe Unanstandigkeiten

FRANCE.

INSTITUTION OF THE LEGION OF HONOR (LEGION D'HONNEUR.)

Buonaparte, surrounded by several officers, is standing upon a platform distributing the badge of the Legion of Honor to the deserving.

YEAR 1802.

When the French Revolution, after raging scarcely two years, had arrived to such a pitch, as to drive the greatest part of the nobility into exile, where they saved nothing but their lives, the National Assembly resolved upon seizing the properties of these emigrants, and of the church, in order to establish a fund of one thousand million of francs, (about \$200,000,000) for rewarding the services of the army. But the sale of so many extensive estates, did not proceed as rapidly and favorably as the leaders of the State might have wished; and the new republic, soon after, being involved in wars with half of Europe, and the public treasury becoming exhausted, the army, although called to harder service than ever, had to go without their deserved reward.

It was not until the year 1802, that the nation could pay this debt, not only to the army, whose gallant deeds had made France the first political power in Europe, but to all those citizens, who had well deserved of their country. These circumstances brought about the institution of the Legion of Honor by Buonaparte.

Yet, to better understand the motives which led to the institution of this order, it will be necessary to recur to some of the events of the preceeding years. The Directory, (directoire) the last revolutionary magistracy in France, received its death-blow by Buonaparte, soon after his return from Egypt, (November 1799) and a new provisional consulate, with Buonaparte for chief, was instituted. If this man had hitherto distinguished himself by his extraordinary military achievements, the world then had no less occasion to be astonished at his statesmanship, so that Abbé Sieyès, the great framer of political constitutions, who together with Roger Ducos, was to share the consulate with Buonaparte, felt prompted to remark to some of his friends, that "now they all had a master, who understood everything, did everything, and was capable of everything."

In this way, Buonaparte, by the superiority of his genius, became the first consul of the republic,

or in reality the leader of France. But this supreme dignity with which Buonaparte was vested, was limited to the short space of three years, after which, he, with his fellow-consuls, would again descend into private life, to give place to their successors.

Such a short enjoyment of supreme power, was altogether inconsistent with the ambition of Buonaparte, who, like Julius Cæsar, would rather be the first in a village, than the second in Rome. On the other hand, his consular reign, was most glorious and beneficial to France; for not only the last cinders of revolution were extinguished, and order and tranquility restored in the country, but the fame of this extraordinary man, gained by his glorious victories, had spread over the whole globe.

The treaty of Lunéville (Feb. 1801), a consequence of the battle of Marengo, extended France as far as the river Rhine, and added Italy to the republic, whose influence became predominant in Germany, and in fact all over Europe. All these advantages were due to the first consul alone, who always excelled alike in battle and council. Prompted by gratitude the Senate then prolonged the consulship of Buonaparte to ten years. Still, this period, even, gave to the ruler of the State, a temporary power, only, the deprivation of which would be felt the more keenly. When therefore Buonaparte, by the treaty of Amiens (1802) had secured the safety and honor of his country against England, the most inveterate and dangerous enemy of France, the Senate passed a resolution conferring upon Buonaparte the consulship for life; and this act was handed to him in the solemn session of August 2nd, 1802, as the expression of the wish of the whole nation. In the interval, between the resolution of the Senate prolonging the consulate ten years, and the plebiscit, creating Buonaparte consul for life, the institution of the Legion of Honor took place, May 19th, 1802.

Buonaparte wished this distinction to be granted only as a token of personal merit, which he

esteemed infinitely higher than any privilege of birth. In this respect he adopted the principles of modern philosophy in France, allowing public rewards to persons of merit alone, without any regard to family. Opposition, however, was raised against this institution, and even by some men who could not be accused, either of aristocratic jealousy, nor of ultra-democratic tendencies.

Buonaparte, surprised that a decoration, so evidently bearing the stamp of equality, should be denounced, as tending to create a merely military order, briefly rebuked this objection in the following words: "If I had at any time entertained such a thought, it would now be altogether out of season, the French nation enjoying perfect liberty. Our republic is composed of thirty millions of people, who by their civilization, by their properties and by their commerce, have but one point in view, that is, prosperity and glory. Compared with such a multitude, three to four hundred thousand soldiers, are of no consideration whatever; the nation itself constitutes the army. If the army were to be separated from the civilians, it would soon acknowledge no other law than that of its own power, and claim to be privileged in every respect; for the peculiarity of the army is despotism, while civilians submit everything to free discussion, to truth and reason. If, therefore, the question of precedence should be raised, I should not hesitate a single moment in deciding in favor of the civilians, for I do not rule the destinies of France, as a general, but I am called to the consulship because the nation has confidence that I possess those qualities of a citizen requisite for governing a state. The Legion of Honor, a name which some people find fault with, is therefore nothing but a reward of merit, without regard to the class to which its recipient may belong."

The objection, as if by the name Legion of Honor, a consular guard was meant, similar to the ill-famed Roman Pretorian Guard, being thus entirely refuted, Buonaparte held the first chapter in the palace of the Tuileries, (May 19th, 1802) where, decorated with flags, a platform was erected, upon which a little chair was placed, with a rich cushion, and upon this a vessel containing the decorations.

Buonaparte, in the regimentals of a general, and surrounded by some of his most distinguished officers, was standing near this chair calling aloud the names of those, who were to be decorated first, and whose presence had been previously requested for this purpose. The happy man who

first received this distinction at his hands, was an aged man, with a wooden leg, in citizen's dress, who had lost a leg in the battle of Marengo, and who lived in the country upon a small pension. When he received the badge of the order, tears of joy rolled down his wrinkled cheeks, and he was hardly able to answer Buonaparte's address. After him many other persons, but most of them belonging to the army, received this distinction, which very naturally provided the consul with new means for gaining the hearts of many.

The badge of this new order was in the form of a star with five double radii, bearing the likeness of Buonaparte, circumscribed by the words "Napoleon First Consul," which afterwards were changed to "Emperor and King." On the reverse there was the French eagle, with lightnings in his claws, and the inscription: "Honor and Fatherland." This badge was attached to a ribbon, worn across the shoulder on the left side.

A private soldier decorated with the order received 250, an officer 1000, a commander 2000, and a general officer 5000 francs a year as an honorary stipend.

When in consequence of the battle of Leipsic, Napoleon was obliged to come back to France as a fugitive, and even to renounce the throne, the new dynasty retained the order, so that it became a real national institution, with the only change, that Napoleon's profile disappeared from the star, and made room for that of Henry IV.,* and on the reverse, lilies occupied the place of the eagle, so as to better adapt it to the new royal government.

Louis XVIII., besides, re-established the old royal orders of the Holy Ghost, of St. Louis, and of St. Lazarus, but, after the revolution in July 1830, which forced the successor of Louis XVIII., Charles X., to leave the country and seek refuge abroad, these three old royal orders were again abolished, and the Legion of Honor adopted as the only order of France, for every sort of merit.

The members of this order are not limited in number, but great discernment and economy is used in its distribution.

* King Henry IV. became king of France in 1589, after the violent death of Henry III., but not without many hard struggles, and reigned till 1610, when he was murdered by a fanatic of the name of Raveillac. He was one of the best monarchs of France, eagerly studying to promote the welfare of his subjects, who, in their gratitude, called him the father of the country. His memory has ever been dear to the French till the present time.

SICILY.

THE SICILIAN VESPER.

An impudent Frenchman, under the pretext of searching for hidden arms, takes indecent liberties with a young and noble lady, who is on her way to church, accompanied by her parents and bridegroom.

YEAR 1282

The last offspring of the house of Hohenstaufen Conradin, scarcely sixteen years of age, had ended his life, full of hope at the outset, by the hands of the executioner, at Naples, 1268, and the church had been completely victorious in her pertinacious contest with this dynasty, that she had so relentlessly hated, and that after flourishing scarcely a hundred years, had come to such a tragical downfall; but her material gain by this victory was very inconsiderable.

The protégé of Pope Clement the II., the cruel and cunning Charles of Anjou, after he had consolidated his new throne by the execution of Conradin, soon became more dangerous to his protector, than any one of the house of Hohenstaufen ever had been to the Roman See.

Charles, as the leader of the Guelfs, (this was the name given in Italy, to the party hostile to the German emperors), succeeded in establishing his authority throughout the whole of Italy. He stretched out one hand to seize the imperial crown of Germany, whilst with the other he tried to push the Greek emperor from his throne, and to establish for his own dynasty, an independent empire on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

This intention, which he took little pains to hide, had already alarmed his protector, Pope Clement; still more so, however, his successors, Pope Gregory X., and Pope Nicolas III. When they, therefore, in their apprehension, turned their eyes towards Germany, there to find a counterbalance against Charles, and to crush his growing power, he as Rome's nearest and most powerful neighbor, contrived to gain such an influence over the election of the popes, that none but men of his own choice, were elevated to that dignity. Thus the popes, in conquering the Hohenstaufs, and promoting the despotic Charles, had acted against their own interests. But Conradin's manes were most terribly avenged; for just when Charles believed himself to be at the height of his power, acquired by selfish ambition and cruelty, he

hurled in the most terrible manner from his position.

After Conradin's defeat at Togliacozza, (1268), not only Naples, but also Sicily, was an easy conquest. The Saracenian colony of Luceria alone, faithful to the house of Hohenstaufen, even in its disasters, defended itself to the last. This strikingly proves that this colony, transplanted from Africa to Italy by the Hohenstaufs, had been always kindly treated by them. But the arrogance and cruelty, with which the French treated their new subjects, and the persecution which many people had to suffer, as alleged partizans of Conradin, roused a spirit of daily increasing discontent. This oppression was most keenly felt by Sicily, whose population principally had favored the Hohenstaufs, and now especially had to feel the resentment of Charles. At length John of Procida, a man of energy, former governor of this island, but deprived of his dignity by Charles under paltry prettexts, conceived the plan of putting an end to oppression. Procida descended from a noble family of Salerno, and derived his name from the little island of Procida, whose proprietor he was; he was a good scholar, and especially well versed in medicine. As an adherent to Conradin, he had been unable to save his property from the greedy hands of Charles, but preserved at least his life by escaping to the court of Aragon, where he met with the most friendly reception, and was indemnified for the loss he had sustained.

Full of hatred against the French, and deeply deploing the fate of the Hohenstaufs, he persuaded the king of Anjou, Peter III, and his wife Constan-tia, daughter of king Manfred, to take vengeance on Charles, and to liberate the oppressed. But Peter not believing himself strong enough to challenge the mighty Charles, caused Procida to go to Sicily, to ascertain the disposition of her inhabitants, and secretly to gain some other ally. In Sicily, Procida found the discontent of his countrymen, with the despotic sway of the French,

greater than he had at first imagined, and consequently was sure of their support in any emergency. Then he disguised himself as a Franciscan monk, and went to Constantinople, to the Greek emperor, Palaeologus, who offered subsidies, and promised arms to the Sicilian barons.

Now Peter of Aragon took courage, and equipped a fleet, and doing this under the pretext of cruising against the infidels of Africa, he was assisted by France, and even by Charles of Anjou himself. And, indeed, he at first intended sailing to Africa, to wait there and see how matters went on in Sicily, but before he arrived off the coast of Africa, the conjuration plotted by John of Procida, had by an accident, already come to an outbreak. It was on Easter Monday, 1282, when the citizens of Palermo were wont to go to vespers, at the church of Montreale, situated at some distance from the city. It was a common promenade, and the French, who themselves enjoyed the walk, had forbidden the Palermitans to carry arms, with which they were in the habit of practising and amusing themselves.

The bells were already ringing for vespers, and many citizens were thronging the way to the church, while others were conversing with each other or gathering flowers. At that moment a Frenchman of rank, named Drouet, approached a young noble lady, going to church, with her parents and bridegroom, and took indecent liberties with her, under the pretext of searching for hidden arms. The young lady swooned, and fell into the arms of her bridegroom, whereupon her relatives hastened to the spot, full of indignation; and many of the bystanders took a lively interest in what happened. Drouet was killed, and in a moment, thousands of hidden daggers were drawn, and thousands of eyes were looking around for victims of vengeance.

The signal had been given, and in a few moments, the slaughter became general, and the vespers were superseded by an awful blood-shed. While the bells of Montreale continued to invite believers to divine service, all the Frenchmen that happened to be there, fell by the daggers of the infuriated Palermitans. Such was their rage, that they did not spare a single one, and even hastened back to Palermo, and searched until they had killed the last of the hated foreigners. From Palermo the insurrection spread rapidly over the whole island. In the town of Latanea alone 8000 Frenchmen lost their lives. In order to recognize them, every unknown person had to pronounce the word "ciceri," (peas), which it was impossible for the French to pronounce well. At Taormina, where many of the French had taken refuge, the same scenes were enacted as at Latanea. In Messina, kept by a strong French garrison, was the last outbreak of the insurrection, at which

time 3000 French were killed. In the whole of Sicily, only two French noblemen were spared and 30,000 Frenchmen are said to have fallen in the space of a few months, as victims to the popular vengeance; an awful expiatory sacrifice indeed, to the manes of Conradin.

Charles of Anjou was staying in Rome with Pope Martin, when he received the news of this dreadful event. In his rage he bit the button of his stick, and swore dreadful vengeance upon the Sicilians, and the Pope pronounced the interdict over the whole country.

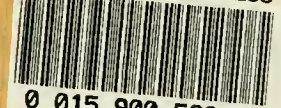
Charles immediately equipped a strong fleet, and sailed to Messina, which he besieged long, but in vain, because the inhabitants being too well aware of their fate, in the event of their being conquered, made superhuman efforts to repulse every attack on their harbor. In the meanwhile, Peter of Aragon, at the head of 30,000 warriors, landed at Palermo, where the inhabitants rejoiced at his arrival, immediately proclaimed him king of Sicily, and swore allegiance.* This had scarcely been done, when Peter's valiant admiral, Loria, sailed to Messina, whilst the army was going there by land, to assist the inhabitants of that town in their struggle. This circumstance induced Charles to give up the siege of Messina, and to retire to the coast of Calabria; but, near Cartona and Reggio, his fleet was overtaken by Loria, who burned all the ships, eighty in number, and Charles standing upon the coast, with tears of rage in his eyes, was compelled to witness the destruction of his fleet, and a great part of his army.

From that moment, the beautiful island of Sicily was lost to Charles, and Peter III. was consolidated in his new possessions. It was in vain that Charles attempted to repair his losses by a new expedition. He died in 1285, before he could witness the complete overthrow of his power in Italy, and although Peter of Aragon died in the same year, his descendents maintained themselves in the possession of Sicily until the end of the fourteenth century.

In 1302 peace was concluded, by virtue of which, Peter's third son, Frederick, was recognized king of Sicily, and Charles II., son of Charles of Anjou, had to content himself with his possessions in lower Italy, or the kingdom of Naples. This treaty was sanctioned by the Pope, not only because Frederick, too, declared himself the vassal of the Pope, but also, because the division of the power of Naples, was agreeable to the interests of the church.

* Conradin had made Peter III. of Aragon his heir, his wife, Constantia, being the daughter of Manfred, an illegitimate son of Emperor Frederick II. of the house of Hohenstaufen.

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